CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A system for preventing unauthorized use of a device, comprising:

a biometric reader, wherein said biometric reader measures a biometric characteristic; and

an authentication unit, wherein said biometric reader transmits said measured biometric characteristic to said authentication unit over a communications link;

wherein the device is embedded within a garment and said authentication unit transmits an authorizing signal to the device when said authentication unit biometrically identifies a user.

2. The system according to claim 1, wherein said authentication unit comprises a database for storing at least one authorized biometric sample and wherein said authentication unit compares said measured biometric characteristic with said authorized biometric samples when said authentication unit receives said measured biometric characteristic from said biometric reader.

3. The system according to claim 2, wherein said authentication unit transmits said authorizing signal to the device when the measured biometric characteristic matches at least one of said authorized biometric samples stored in said authentication unit.

4. The system according to claim 1, wherein said biometric reader comprises a transceiver and said authentication unit comprises a transceiver, wherein said transceiver of said biometric reader transmits said measured biometric characteristic to said transceiver of said authentication unit over a wireless communications link.

5. The system according to claim 1, wherein said biometric reader is a fingerprint reader.

6. The system according to claim 1, wherein said biometric reader is incorporated in a garment opening mechanism and wherein said biometric reader measures said biometric characteristic when a user operates said garment opening mechanism.

7. The system according to claim 6, wherein said garment opening mechanism is a zipper.

8. The system according to claim 6, wherein said biometric reader comprises a first power source and the authentication unit comprises a second power source, wherein said second power source charges said first power source.

9. The system according to claim 8, wherein said garment opening mechanism comprises a first portion having a set of first electrical contacts and a second portion having a corresponding set of second electrical contacts, wherein when said first portion is in contact with said second portion, said second power source charges said first power source through said first and second electrical contacts.

10. The system according to claim 1, wherein in response to said authorizing signal, the device grants access to the user who has been biometrically identified.

11. A system for preventing unauthorized use of a device, comprising:

a biometric reader, wherein said biometric reader measures a biometric characteristic;

a garment opening mechanism, wherein said biometric reader is incorporated in said garment opening mechanism and said garment opening mechanism is incorporated in a garment; and

an authentication unit, wherein said biometric reader transmits said measured biometric characteristic to said authentication unit when a user operates said garment opening mechanism;

wherein the device is embedded within the garment and said authentication unit transmits an authorizing signal to the device when said authentication unit biometrically identifies the user.

12. A system for preventing unauthorized use of a device, comprising:

an authentication unit, wherein said authentication unit identifies an authorized user; and

a controller embedded within a garment, wherein said authentication unit transmits a first authorizing signal to said controller when said authentication unit identifies the authorized user;

wherein the device is embedded with the garment and when said controller receives said first authorizing signal, said controller transmits a second authorizing signal to the device.

13. A method for preventing unauthorized use of a device, comprising the steps of:

measuring a biometric characteristic;

comparing the measured biometric characteristic with at least one stored biometric sample to determine if the measured biometric characteristic is from an authorized user; and

transmitting an authorizing signal to a device embedded within a garment if the measured biometric characteristic is from an authorized user.

14. The method according to claim 13, further comprising the step of transmitting the measured biometric characteristic over a wireless communications link.

15. The method according to claim 13, further comprising the step of performing said measuring step when a user operates a garment opening mechanism.

16. The method according to claim 13, further comprising the step of granting access to the device in response to said transmitting step.